

## **AHS Integration Efforts Autism Planning for the Future**

**Date:** Thursday, May 23, 2023

11:00-12:30

Facilitator: Cheryle Wilcox

Notetaker: Molly Bumpas

**Overall Goal of our work group:** How do we use our collective resources to move autism services forward for children and their families in Vermont?

### **Strategic Plan Goals:**

- A. To challenge and advise the current system to identify creative, collaborative, and flexible strategies to deliver family-centered care throughout a child's journey from early identification and diagnosis through adult services.
- B. Increase access to assessments, supports and services up and through transition to adulthood.
- C. Educate community about inclusion and neurodiversity.

**Present today:** Laurie Mulhern, Emma Saunders, Mel Houser, Tova Eisemann, Danielle Cohen, Julie Smith, Leslie Davis, Cathy Booth, Cammie Naylor, Danielle Brier, Kara Hurwitch, Cassie Santo, Becky Zopf, EmmaRose McCadden, Janelle Germaine, Jamie Rainville, Cortney Keene, Molly Bumpas, Cheryle Wilcox

### **Special Education Rule Changes,** Guest, *Cassie Santo, Agency of Education, Inclusive Practices Coordinator*

- Form 12: Already in place as of July 1, 2022. This is a parent input form to be sent to families after IEP meetings. Parent has 10 days to fill out and return. This form ensures that parent's input will be reflected in the IEP. Trying to get this information to parents is important. Form 12 does not apply to 504 plans (504 is guided by federal regulation in Vermont). Forms can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/special-education-forms>
- Adverse Effect: In early 90's, adverse effect rules began to require 3 different measures below the 15<sup>th</sup> percentile in a basic skill area for a student to qualify for special education/IEP. Vermont is only state with this burdensome model. The NEW DEFINITION, going into effect July 1, 2023, is more flexible and includes adverse effect in functional skill performance. This could look different for every student: social emotional and communication, independent living skills, transition/job skills are some examples. Parents may need to request a special education evaluation for eligibility: the timeline for an eval is still 60 days. Student may be on EST and an IEP. VFN has recordings describing the rule changes on its youtube channel.
- Also changing will be the eligibility category of specific learning disability (SLD). The discrepancy model will be prohibited in VT. If a student has SLD, they do not need to meet adverse effect because it is in the definition of SLD itself. Schools will look at if student is responding to research based practices (PBIS, RTI) before determining if they meet the criteria for SLD.
- There are also changes to Series 1300 – changes to funding. This is a general education initiative for all learners that goes from a reimbursement model to census-based funding model. It impacts the question: are students in need of specialized instruction?

- Specially designed instruction: IDEA has never mandated who can provide this. In essence, a special education teacher should be designing and monitoring the instruction, and this can be in collaboration with a general education teacher.

More information on new rule changes: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/rule-changes>

### **Updates**

- Tova shared that Bounce ABA is opening a center for younger children in Essex Junction (end of July/September timeframe). Estimate 10-15 children. They will also continue to provide in-home services as well.
- Our September Workgroup meeting will be IN PERSON with a zoom option. Wednesday September 27, 1:00 – 2:30 at state building in Waterbury (AHS - WSOC Cherry B 35 RmA201)

**June:** Adam Poulin from Children with Special Health Needs will join to talk about a new initiative to train Vermont pediatricians in Autism diagnosis.

